

REMARKS

Claims 27-32 have been amended.

The Examiner has rejected applicants' claims 27-32 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by the Iwai, et al. (US 5,175,681) patent. Applicants have amended applicants' independent claims 27, 31 and 32 and, with respect to such claims, as amended, and their respective dependent claims, the Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants' independent claims 27, 31 and 32 have been amended to better define applicants' invention. More particularly, applicants' amended independent claims 27, 31 and 32 have been amended to recite an apparatus, method and program storage medium in which there is an accumulation of prior art document related to a patent application. These claims have been further amended to recite displaying a list of prior art documents of the patent application and a corresponding foreign application of the patent application which have been accumulated. Such constructions are not taught or suggested by the cited art of record.

Applicants first submit that the Examiner has not addressed applicants' arguments in applicants' Amendment After Final dated March 4, 2004 that the Iwai, et al. patent fails to teach or suggest displaying a list of technical documents of a patent application and a corresponding foreign patent application. Moreover, the same arguments are believed to apply to applicants' amended claims and such arguments are repeated and incorporated herein by reference.

Applicants further submit the the newly cited passages of the Iwai, et al. patent are also devoid of a teaching or suggestion of applicants' claimed invention. More particularly, line 25 of column 9 through line 35 of column 10, disclose the storing of step data of "filing of the first application, filing other applications, receiving official filing receipts, first publications,

requesting examinations, receiving search reports, receiving office actions, filing responses to office actions, filing amendments, receiving final office actions or decisions of restrictions, filing appeals, second publications, receiving oppositions, receiving notices of allowance, grants or acceptances, issues of patents and so forth.” These passages also refer to the display format of FIG. 7. However, it is evident that the accumulating of step data as described in this passage and the display of FIG. 7 are not a teaching or suggestion of displaying a list of prior art documents of a patent application and a corresponding foreign patent application.

Likewise, the passage at column 17, lines 1-25, concerns the entry of data as set forth in the display of FIG. 9 and the updating of data entry as shown in FIG. 10. The passage also mentions “updating data with respect to respective applications, monitoring process operations in the applications, with an agent or the like and so forth” and that “[u]pdating of data with respect to individual applications, includes entry of incoming jobs, such as a response to an office action issued for the subject application, payment of an issue fee or other necessary fee, and so forth are included.”

Again, nothing is shown in FIGS. 9 and 10, nor is anything stated in this passage which teaches or suggests displaying a list of prior art documents of a patent application and a corresponding foreign patent application.

Finally, the passage at column 18, lines 30-67, of the Iwai, et al. patent also fails in this regard. More particularly, this passage discusses the display format of FIG. 12 and entry of data in blocks 344, 345 and 346 of this display. Blocks 344-346 indicate the initial term and extension terms for responding to a received U.S. office action. However, in this case also, neither FIG. 12, nor the description in the passage, teaches or suggests displaying a list of prior art documents of a patent application and a corresponding foreign patent application.

Applicants' amended independent claims 27, 31 and 32, and their respective dependent claims, all of which recite such features, thus patentably distinguish over the Iwai, et al. patent.

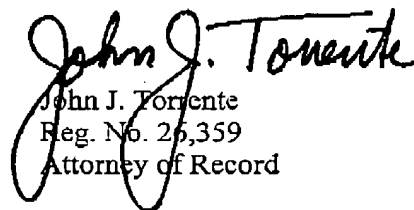
In view of the above, it is submitted that applicants' claims, as amended, patentably distinguish over the cited art of record. Accordingly, reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

Applicants have enclosed herewith a Request For A Telephone Interview asking that the Examiner telephone applicants' undersigned attorney to conduct a telephone interview with the Examiner to discuss the subject Amendment and this application, in the event the Examiner is still not disposed to allow the application.

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Respectfully submitted,

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